

encoding a detectable gene product which is disposed downstream of a basic promoter element, preferably a TATA box, which is joined to the binding element which is preferably a GAL4 binding element; 2) a CMV promoter driven vector encoding a fusion protein composed of the yeast GAL4 binding domain and the transactivation domain of the transcription factor ELK-1; and 3) a vector encoding a FLK-1 VEGF receptor. The cell lines of the present invention can be used to demonstrate upregulation of the detectable gene product (e.g. luciferase) in the presence of VEGF. That is, utilizing established signal transduction pathways, VEGF bioactivity can be assayed.

Please replace the paragraph that begins on page 4, line 26 with the following:

In general, utilizing known signal transduction relationships and/or pathways, a sample to be assayed for VEGF bioactivity is placed in a container containing the stable cell line as described above. If VEGF is present in the sample, VEGF activates FLK-1 expressed by the stable cell line. Activated FLK-1, which is a known VEGF receptor, then activates MAP kinase (Kroll and Waltenberger, *J. Biol. Chem.*, 1997:272:32521-32527; Doanes et. al., *Biochem. Biophys. Res. Comm.*, 1999;255:545-548). The activated MAP kinase phosphorylates the fusion trans-activation protein (GAL4 DNA binding domain [dbd] fused with ELK-1). The phosphorylated fusion protein binds to the GAL4 DNA binding site of the reporter vector activating luciferase expression. Luciferase expression can be detected utilizing techniques well-known in the art. The presence or expression of luciferase indicates VEGF activity in the sample.

Please replace the third full paragraph on page 8 with the following:

Figure 10 shows the effects of AdVEGF₁₂₁ obtained from using a media from AdVEGF₁₂₁ transfected rat 2 cells. The addition of AdVEGF₁₂₁ to the VEGF-receptor cell line affected luciferase expression in a dose response manner both from the AdVEGF₁₂₁ itself and from the media from AdVEGF₁₂₁ transfected rat 2 cells.